THE MORTON ARBORETUM

*Joy Morton, founder* LISLE, ILLINOIS

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## ROSES YOU CAN DEPEND ON, THEIR SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS AND USES

Although the Morton Arboretum does not maintain a garden of hybrid teas, floribundas, polyanthas and other of the less hardy types, there are among the roses comprising the Arboretum collection a goodly number of dependable forms, predominantly shrubby, which are not only desirable ornamentally but most rewarding from the standpoint of other benefits they have to offer.

Most roses do, of course, demand a certain amount of maintenance, the removal of dead wood and the checking of excessive growth, regular fertilizing, spraying when necessary, and in the case of the tender forms, winter protection. The species and varieties mentioned here are all hardy shrubby types, however, tolerant of local conditions and for the most part able to fare for themselves without coddling.

### Roses for Early Bloom

*Rosa primula* Primrose Rose (8 ft.)

This is the earliest species to bloom in the Arboretum, a tall, erect branched bush whose single cupped roses of pale primrose open shortly after mid May, oftentimes simultaneously with *Syringa chinensis* and some of the other lilacs. The reddish brown branches are armed with stout spines and furnished with aromatic foliage of particularly fine texture. Small dark red hips provide interest in early fall. Because of its density of growth and symmetrical outline the Primrose Rose is a splendid specimen shrub of many garden uses. It ranges from Turkestan to North China.

*Rosa hugonis,* Father Hugo Rose (to 8 ft.)

Later in May appear the larger, two inch diameter blooms of the Father Hugo Rose, a species introduced from Central China just before the beginning of the century. Flowering in great abundance, it provides a fitting prelude to the rose season to follow. Its foliage is not as fine textured as that of the Primrose Rose and its habit of growth more sprawling. The fruit is black.

*Rosa spinosissima fulgens* Scotch Rose variety (6 ft.)

As early as the third week in May this Scotch Rose variety is abloom, a medium sized rounded bush well covered with an abundance of single flowers of bright rosy pink hue, lighter in the center, darker around the edges. A deeper color characterizes the bud stage. Blue green foliage of small size and very finely formed sets them off handsomely and continues to provide landscape interest after the blossom season is over. The brownish branches though slender in appearance, are well armed and remarkably tough. A fruit effect of extended interest is provided by the globular, dark brown, sepal crowned hips. They eventually turn black.

*Rosa harisoni* Harison's Yellow Rose (8 ft.)

For reliability nothing compares with the old fashioned Harison's Yellow Rose, a hybrid thought to be of Austrian Brier (*foetida*) and Scotch (*spinosissima*) parentage. Not as early as the foregoing, for its double, two inch diameter bright golden yellow blooms do not open until early June, it is a very dependable species and a familiar inhabitant of many a dooryard garden. Its arching canes are brown, armed with long, straight thorns and its fruit very dark, almost black. It was introduced in 1830 by Rev. Harison, Rector of Trinity Church in New York.

**Roses with Recurrent Bloom**

*Rosa spinosissima* "Stanwell Perpetual" Stanwell Perpetual Rose (to 3 ft.)

This accidental hybrid thought to be of Scotch-Damask parentage was discovered in England in the garden of a Mrs. Lee at Stanwell. Scotch ancestry is plainly evident in its fine textured light green foliage and low compact growth, while its fragrance is attributable to its Damask background. Flat, semi-double pale blush or white flowers three inches or more across appear in abundance in early June and sporadically from then until frost.

*Rosa rugosa Blanc Double De Coubert* Blanc Double De Coubert Rose (to 6 ft.)

Of all the hybrid *"rugosas"*, Blanc Double De Coubert best meets the requirements of a hardy free flowering landscape shrub. There is an unusual richness to its rugose green foliage, and its long pointed buds and double blossoms of pure white are not only lovely to look at but pleasingly scented as well. Peak bloom occurs in June, but if the rest of the summer is moist there will be recurrent blossom right up until frost. The orange yellow autumn foliage coloration is typical of other *"rugosas"* and occasionally this hybrid will bear showy red fruit. Although an excellent subject for the shrubbery border, Blanc Double de Coubert is also a fine informal hedge plant.

**Roses with Fragrant or Colored Foliage**

*Rosa eglanteria* Sweet Brier Rose, Eglantine (6 ft.)

Any garden featuring scented plants would benefit from inclusion of the Sweet Brier or Eglantine, an erect branched thorny bush whose young foliage emits a spicy apple-like fragrance especially noticeable when dew covered or after a shower. The dainty clustered single pink flowers are June borne and while not large are attractively displayed against the light green foliage.

Lillian Gibson Rose, x Rosa Lillian Gibson (*"blanda"* x H. T. "Red Star"), a Dr. N. E. Hansen introduction developed at the South Dakota Agricultural Experimental Station at Brookings.

*Rosa rubrifolia* Redleaf Rose (6 ft.)

Lively, purplish tinged grayish foliage and conspicuous smooth red stems mark the Redleaf Rose, a graceful bush of open growth indigenous to the mountains of Central and Southern Europe. And, even without benefit of the small single pink flowers whose clusters bespangle the bush in June, this rose can well stand on the merits of its foliage alone. We are growing it as a clipped hedge but as a border subject or accent specimen it would be none the less effective. Dark red fruit supplements its other interests in the fall.

## Roses for Ground Covers

*Rosa rugosa* "Max Graf" Max Graf Rose (to 12, occasionally 18 in.)

For effectively planting sunny banks and slopes or for use in parterres, this low growing hybrid *(rugosa x wichuraiana)* performs efficiently and with finesse. Practically procumbent, it will trail over large areas, combining the attractiveness of glossy green *"rugosa"* foliage with an abundance of pure pink golden centered flowers. The latter are single, two or three inches across and freely produced throughout most of June and into early July.

*Rosa pauli* (syn. *rugosa repens alba*) Pauls Rose (1 ft.)

Another trailing ground cover type is this single white flowered hybrid (*arvensis x rugosa*), whose wide petaled golden centered flowers have been likened to white clematis blossoms. It blooms in June, giving an effect comparable to that of its pink flowered relative, "Max Graf". We imported it from the Hesse Nurseries in Germany in 1952.

*Rosa wichuraiana* Memorial Rose (1 ft.)

Also trailing, but with a more slender, daintier habit of growth is the Memorial Rose from the Orient, one of the parents of our modern ramblers. Small lustrous leaves which are semi-evergreen in milder climates largely account for the landscape interest of this rose although the single white flowers (2″ diameter) in late June and early July are quite as worthy of note. Their fragrance is distinctive. Reddish fruits follow in the fall. Use it as a ground cover on steep banks or rocky slopes in full sun and the Memorial Rose will be sure to please.

## Roses for Living Fences

*Rosa multiflora* Japanese Rose (to 8 ft.)

The widely heralded Japanese Rose with its formidably armed arching canes, while quite suitable for farm fencing or for boundary planting on suburban acreages, is certainly not the rose for small city properties. For under average growing conditions (reasonably good soil, full exposure to sun) it will grow to 8 ft. or more in height and eventually spread to exceed this dimension. Furthermore, it is inclined to develop a great deal of dead wood, complicating the maintenance problem. Ornamentally there is merit in its large pyramidal clusters of single white flowers (June) and in the showy small Chinese red fruit which colors in the fall and persists through the winter.

*Rosa multiflora cathayensis* Cathay Japanese Rose (to 8 ft.)

Of more refined appearance and showier in blossom is the Cathay Rose, a "*multiflora*" variety introduced from China in 1907. Its single pale pink roses are three times larger than those of the type species, of a lovely soft pink hue, and borne in few to many flowered rather flat corymbs.

*Rosa setigera* Prairie Rose (to 8 ft., taller as a climber)

The Prairie Rose has earned the distinction of being not only one of the handsomest of our native species, but also the latest to flower. A roadside delight in late June or early July when its long scrambling canes display their full panicles of single bright pink blooms (2 inches in diameter), it is a splendid subject for fence rows, rustic fences or other plantings of informal character. And, if by chance support is at hand, it will carry its colorful show right up into nearby trees or trelliage. The autumn ripening red fruit is also of interest and lasts well.

*x Rosa "Lillian Gibson"* (*"blanda"* x H. T. "Red Star") Lillian Gibson Rose (6 ft.)

An informal hedge of the Lillian Gibson Rose would be a spectacular sight indeed, and while possible to use it as such, the plant would seem more appropriate for planting along a fence, preferably a white one, where the lovely coloring of its pink blooms could be featured to greatest advantage. The deep pink buds open into darker centered, semi-double clear pink roses almost two and a half inches in diameter and borne on long pedicels. They are generously distributed along the stems and have an extended period of effectiveness. Peak bloom is reached during the second week in June, tapering off toward the end of the month. Long, arching canes armed with widely spaced, sharp, narrow pointed spines, are further identifying features as is the clean appearing, fresh green foliage of medium size. Each leaf consists of from five to seven leaflets. The Lillian Gibson Rose was developed by Dr. N. E. Hansen at the South Dakota Agricultural Experimental Station at Brookings and introduced in 1938. By virtue of its hardiness, prolificacy of bloom and overall attractiveness it would seem destined to great popularity once it is made available in the nursery trade.

**Roses for Clipped Hedges**

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| *Rosa hugonis* | Father Hugo Rose | (See Roses for Early Bloom) |
| *Rosa multiflora* | Japanese Rose | (See Roses for Living Fences) |
| *Rosa primula* | Primrose Rose | (See Roses for Early Bloom) |
| *Rosa rubrifolia* | Redleaf Rose | (See Roses with Colored Foliage) |
| *Rosa rugosa Blanc Double De Coubert* | Blanc Double De Coubert Rose | (See Roses with Recurrent Bloom) Develops into a better hedge if left unclipped |

E. L. Kammerer

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